

**Minutes of the 2022-23 IHSA Competitive Cheerleading  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, March 8, 2023**

The IHSA [Competitive Cheerleading Advisory Committee](#) meeting was conducted with the following voting members in attendance: IHSA Division 1 Coach - Jordan Miller, Chicago (Marist) High School; IHSA Division 2 Administrator - Audra Christenson, St. Charles North High School; IHSA Division 3 Coach - Amy Cook, Bradley-Bourbonnais High School; IHSA Division 4 Coach - Joey Stanforth, Taylor Ridge (Rockridge) High School; IHSA Division 5 Coach - Pia Krieger, Paris High School; IHSA Division 6 Athletic Director – Brad Jacobson, Knoxville High School; IHSA Division 7 Coach – Linda Drust, Carterville High School, and IHSA Official Lance Emery. Representatives John Powers, CCOI; Cindy Rueter, ICCA; and Tim Babin, IHSCCO also attended the meeting. Shon Henry (CPS) and Carrie Nichols (Varsity State Director) also attended the meeting. IHSA Assistant Executive Director, Susie Knoblauch, conducted the meeting.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Recommendation: I. A. School Classification – Divisions & VIII. B. Tournament Rules - Participants** 4. Coed Team Division: ~~Two males~~ **One or more males** on the competition floor is an open division and shall have up to 24 rostered participants with 20 on the competition floor.

**Rationale:** This change would better balance the number of schools in each division and limit the competitive advantage that a team *may* have with one male in the traditional team divisions.

### History

2005-2009 - 1 male on the competition floor defined as Coed

2009-10 - 2 males on the competition floor defined Coed for the 2010-11 season

2010-11 - Back to 1 male on the competition floor defined Coed – did not pass

2014 - Proposed to 1 male on the competition floor – died lake of motion

2016 - Proposed to 1 male on the competition floor – died lack of motion

### **Died for Lack of Motion**

- 2. Recommendation VI. I. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules - State Final Performance Order: (Add new language)** For the final round of competition on Saturday, teams will compete in reverse order from how they placed in prelims (e.g., The team with the highest score after Friday prelims in a particular division will compete last in that division during finals).

**Rationale:** Currently, there is a prescribed performance order based on placement for teams coming out of sectional to the State Final preliminary rounds but no prescribed order from prelims to finals at State. The Final round performance order is currently random. This change will provide a culminating experience and reward the team who is advancing first in placement out of prelims.

### History

Proposed in 2014 – Failed

### Died for Lack of Motion

3. **Recommendation: VIII. F. 3. Tournament Rules – Scoring:** ~~When five panel officials are used at the state final, the high and low scores will be dropped. The remaining scores are averaged. (Delete language)~~

**Rationale:** When the high and low scores are dropped with comparative scoring, those rankings are taken out of consideration which impacts the overall standings a judge uses to place teams in rank order. With the current practice of dropping a judge's high/low score the points needed to appropriately rank a team based on the rubric skills are eliminated which impacts that judge's consistency of ranking scores. At sectionals, three-panel officials' scores are averaged, and the high/low outliers are not dropped. State scoring would be consistent with sectionals and all scores are averaged. Judging, the scoresheets and the rubric have evolved so the current guard rails of dropping high and low to prevent outliers are currently not necessary.

### Approved by Consent

4. **Recommendation: IX. E. Tournament Policies – Videotaping:** ~~The IHSA prohibits any taping for the purpose of video reviewing during the tournament.~~  
(Add new language) The IHSA shall allow videotaping for the purpose of confirmation of (5-point) illegal skill deductions. The request to confirm via video would only be made by the Technical Officials via the Head Technical Official. Panel officials will not have a video review option. Other skills and deductions such as majority or minor legalities cannot be reviewed.

**Rationale:** For use at the State Series, video review will assist in confirming the 5-Point deductions from the technical officials. Deduction for illegal skills can take a team out of advancing. Having a video review allows officials to confirm a call. This can provide an educational opportunity for coaches on why a call was made and confirm that the call was accurately made by the technical panel.

### Died for Lack of Motion

5. **Recommendation:** [Deduction Form](#) - Out-of-Bounds Calls

**Current:** Boundary violation is 0.5 for having one foot or hand over the boundary line.  
**Proposed:** Boundary violation reduced to 0.25.

**Rationale:** Reducing the boundary violation would make it equal to an incomplete tumbling skill. Stepping out of bounds is currently as punitive as tumbling that lands in a compromised position where serious risk could occur. Stepping out of bounds does not increase risk.

### Approved by Consent

6. **Recommendation:** [Scoresheet Rubric](#) - Partner Stunts - Unassisted/Assisted Single Base Stunts

**Current:** Unassisted single base extended skill is a Level 3 skill and Unassisted toss hands continuing to an extended skill is a Level 4 skill

**Proposed:** Assisted walk-in or toss hands to extended skill is Level 3 skill and unassisted walk-in or toss hands to extended skill is Level 4 skill

**Rationale:** Current rubric does not reward unassisted walk-in skills. An athlete could unassisted walk-in hands press to an extended cupie and it would be Level 3 skills because it wasn't a toss hands. Changing the rubric to reflect assisted walk-in or toss skills at Level 3 would reward a difficult skill with minimal bases. All the other transitional skills in Level 3 could be done with up to four bases to receive credit. Assisted single-base extended skills are done with two bases. All unassisted skills to extended, regardless of how they get to prep level (or if it is tossed to immediate extended) should be rewarded as Level 4 skills.

**PARTNER STUNTS**

Additional partner stunt skills, beyond those credited to degree of difficulty, will be rewarded in the Skill Utilization category.

LEVEL 1: 6-7	LEVEL 2: 7-8	LEVEL 3: 8-9	LEVEL 4: 9-10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Intermediate level partner stunts</li> <li>-Prep level skills</li> <li>-Extensions</li> <li>-¼ or ½ up to prep level</li> <li>-¼ or ½ up to extended skill</li> <li>-Full up to prep level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-High to low tick-tock</li> <li>-Low to low full around</li> <li>-Ground inversion to prep</li> <li>-Extended single leg skill with a full twisting dismount</li> <li>-Switch up, quick toss, ¼ up, ½ up to extended level with one advanced body position*</li> <li>-Prep level inversion to extended single leg skill</li> <li>-Assisted single base extended skill</li> <li>-Unassisted single base prep level skills</li> <li>-Toss ball up to extension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must demonstrate a Level 3 skill with <b>two (2)</b> different advanced body positions* AND a full twisting dismount from an extended advanced body position or a single based extended stunt</li> <li>-Toss ball up to advanced body position</li> <li>-Switch up to advanced body position</li> <li>-Switch up with ¼ turn to extended single leg skill</li> <li>-Full up to extension</li> <li>-Ground inversion to extended</li> <li>-Ground level inversion release to prep</li> <li>-Low to high tick-tock beginning in a liberty</li> <li>-Low to high full arounds</li> <li>-Low to high tick-tock ½ twist to liberty</li> <li>-Prep level inversion release to extension</li> <li>-Unassisted single base extended skill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must demonstrate <b>two (2)</b> different Level 4 skills with <b>three (3)</b> different advanced body positions* AND a full twisting dismount from an extended advanced body positions or a single based extended stunt</li> <li>-Toss ball full up to extended</li> <li>-Switch up with at least a ¼ twist to an extended advanced body position</li> <li>-Full up to an extended single leg skill</li> <li>-1 ½ up to extended</li> <li>-Low to high tick-tock advanced to advanced body position</li> <li>-High to high tick-tock</li> <li>-Low to high full around to an extended single leg skill</li> <li>-High to high full arounds</li> <li>-Prep level inversion release to extended single leg skill</li> <li>-Ground level inversion release to extended</li> <li>-Cradle/horizontal position release to extended</li> <li>-Double up to extended</li> <li>-Unassisted toss hands continuing to an extended skill</li> </ul>

\*\*Please note: Lists of stunts are not all inclusive \*\*

\*Extended advanced body positions include: Arabesque, heel stretch, over stretch, bow and arrow, scale, scorpion, needle etc. . .

**Approved by Consent**

**7. Recommendation:** Adjusting Toss Majority Grid

**Current:** Approved majority grid is as follows:

Athletes	Needed for Majority
9 or less	1
10-15	2
16-20	3

**Proposed:**

Athletes based on 5	Needed for Majority
9 or less	1
10-19	2
20	3

**Rationale:** The current grid is not based on groups of 5 or groups of 4, it is somewhere in the middle. This proposal clarifies whether the majority is based on groups of 5 or 4 and adjusts the rubric accordingly. For safety reasons, we typically encourage groups of 5 and if teams use groups of 4, that would be more difficult and could be awarded as such (like single base skills). If the majority is based on groups of 5, three tosses would only be required for large or coed teams with 20 as a team with 19 who throw two tosses of 5 would have ten participating, which is the majority. Groups of 4 should follow quad stunts.

**Approved by Consent**

## 8. Recommendation - [Scoresheet Rubric](#) - Skill Utilization

**Current:** Defines how many times in a routine an athlete is not utilized effectively:

Level 1 – Many times, throughout the routine athletes, are not utilized effectively

Level 2 – Three to four times throughout the routine athletes are not utilized effectively

Level 3 – One or two times throughout the routine athletes are not utilized effectively

Level 4 – Athletes are utilized effectively throughout the entire routine

**Proposed:** Change rubric language as follows

Level 1 - Athletes not utilized effectively in most of the routine

Level 2 - Many times, throughout the routine athletes, are not utilized effectively -The team only demonstrates skills that get them into a skill-based rubric range -Additional skills performed distract from routine

Level 3 - Three to four times throughout the routine athletes are not utilized effectively -The team demonstrates more than the required skills defined in 1 skill based rubric category

Level 4 - One to two times throughout the routine athletes are not utilized effectively -The team demonstrates more than the required skills defined in 2 skill based rubric categories - Athletes are utilized effectively throughout the entire routine -The team demonstrates more than the required skills defined in 3 skill based rubric categories -Additional skills enhance the overall routine

**Rationale:** By defining the number of times an athlete is not utilized effectively, you are giving a judge a reason not to put them in Level 4. For example, if you have an extra person who is not participating in the pyramid but standing behind the pyramid, you are not eligible for Level 4 as defined by the rubric. If you are executing running tumbling one by one and athletes are standing on the side waiting their turn, this could be one time where a judge decides they aren't utilized and drops you to Level 3. If we keep skill utilization, using most and majority allows more discretion to keep teams at higher ranges if they meet other rubric requirements.

**Approved by Consent**

### IHSA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) Recommendation

**Recommendation:** Sideline and competitive cheerleaders, where jumping, tumbling, and building skills take place, must take 1 calendar day off from cheerleading/spirit activities once every IHSA calendar week. Programs on an off day are limited to stretching or film; no other physical activity can take place on an off day. This also applies during the summer contact period, so that the participants, individually, get a day off a week.

**Rationale:** IHSA sports medicine data has shown an increase in concussions during spirit activities (sideline & competitive cheer), likely from overuse and exhaustion as the sport/activity can require a 7-day-a-week, 12-month-a-year commitment. By lessening exposure, the focus can be on risk minimization as programs can have a day of recovery from sideline and competition requirements.

**Approved by Consent**

### ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

1. IHSA will post raw scores, deductions, legalities, and the final scores of every team competing in the state series.

**Approved by Consent**

2. IHSA will work with Tourney Wire to incorporate a drop-down feature in the scoring program for performance-based legalities that tech officials can use to separate minor violations with same-point values.

**Approved by Consent**

3. Technical officials will only need to write the NFHS Spirit Rules number and cite where the rule violation occurs in the routine instead of writing out the entire rule infraction, description of the rule, and page number.

**Approved by Consent**

## ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. Heard updates from [ICCA](#), [IHSCCO](#), and [CCOI](#).
2. Reviewed the [NFHS Spirit](#) and [USA Cheer](#) resources
3. Reviewed the 2022-23 competitive cheer state series. Knoblauch acknowledged and thanked the sectional host sites. Any school interested in hosting an IHSA cheer sectional can contact Knoblauch at the IHSA and/or complete the Host Availability Survey/Facility Survey via their school admin. in the IHSA Schools Center.
4. Submitted items from post-season coaches' meetings were reviewed and discussed.
5. Discussed sectional assignments, balance, travel, and order of divisions.
6. Reviewed warm-up areas, (sectional warm-ups at 8 – minute stations) warm-up schedule times, and formats.
7. Judging, scoresheet, and rubric interpretations were discussed. Items for points of emphasis and clarifications were reviewed.
8. Category scoring was discussed.
9. Reviewed the officials ranking and assignment process and steps to recruit and retain officials.
10. Reviewed the officiating assigning process.
11. Discussed the adoption, education, and communication of comparative scoring.
12. Examined a standard number in tumbling as opposed to a “majority” in each division.
13. Examined a proposal regarding the requirement of at least 2 partner stunt groups for synchronization to be properly assessed.
13. Discussed minimum team numbers on the competition floor for participation. Multiple proposals were discussed about participation.
14. There is concern that coaches are manipulating the scoresheet by choosing to limit their teams or leaving some athletes on the bench so the team can max the required majority skills. The committee did not pass a proposal that sets a minimum number of participants required on the competition floor. However, they considered addressing this issue via the rubric.
15. Discussed the posting of scoring interpretations that both officials and coaches receive.
16. Provided a timeline for the [2022-23 NFHS Spirit Rules Changes](#).
17. Reviewed the in-kind partnership between the IHSA and Varsity Brands.
18. Acknowledged and thanked the following outgoing committee members Audra Christenson from St. Charles North High School, and Coach Pia Krieger from Paris High School for their service on the [Competitive Cheer Advisory Committee](#) and for their support of the IHSA.